

THE LEISURE HOUR

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—Cooper.



"DONT-EE CRY SO, DONT-EE, THEN, POOR LITTLE DEARS," SAID THE GRAVE-DIGGER TO THE ORPHANS.

STORY OF THE CROOKED SIXPENCE.

CHAPTER XVIII.—THE ORPHANS.

On the following evening, the poor clerk renewed his visionary engagement, and wrote down the past history of the young sailor—Sixpence's new owner; Sixpence dictating as before.

Place before you, in your thoughts, the crowded churchyard of a busy town. Let it be a cold No-

vember day, with drizzling rain and mist. The iron gates of the dismal ground are thrown open, so are the temple doors, the stone slab pavement leading to which is slippery with foggy moisture, while the tall rank grass which covers the ancient lowly graves hangs heavily from the same cause.

Listen to the mournful toll of the funeral bell. It booms heavily, but few regard it, it is so common, so very common there. There are funerals

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PRICE ONE PENNY.

every day; and the grave-digger, as he turns up and shovels out the dark fat mould, and, with it, fragments of coffins and decaying bones, says that "if we go on at this rate, we must find out some other place for burying in." Yes, there are funerals every day in that old churchyard.

There is one in hand now. Hark! the bell has ceased, and the white-robed priest meets the funeral procession. The procession! a very limited one: a plain elm coffin, rough and unornamented, borne on the shoulders of four men in shabby, threadbare, seedy, brown-black garments of ancient date and fashion. The coffin is partially covered with the undertaker's cheapest pall of old cotton velvet, faded and almost pileless, flounced with yellow-white cambric. It is "a very poor funeral"—little better than that of a pauper.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life." The comforting and spirit-stirring words of the Divine Master are hurriedly and carelessly read as he in the white robe retraces his steps in advance of the coffin, as quickly as may be, from the churchyard gate to the church door; and then, for a short space, priest and clerk, and coffin and bearers and mourners, disappear within the building.

Mourners! They are two: a slight, pale, tender, sorrowful girl, fifteen or sixteen years old, leaning on the arm of a boy two or three years younger. They are dressed in deep mourning, of very cheap materials, as it had need to be. They weep very sadly. They are sister and brother. They follow their father to the grave: they are poor, and they know no earthly friend now that he is gone from them. They are strangers, too, in a strange place. They may well weep.

The dismal procession re-appears. The sexton goes in advance, and silently leads the way to the shallow grave which is to be the final resting-place of a man whose battlings with adversity are over. The service is soon concluded, and the surpliced priest, after casting a look of curiosity, perhaps not unmingled with compassion, on the two grief-stricken children, retires to the vestry, and thence to his home. Yes, he feels sorry, no doubt, for the young mourners; but he does not know them, and such sights are so very common in that burial-ground.

The clerk retires too, so does the undertaker's lad, so do the bearers, but the grave-digger remains. He is anxious to complete his work and to go home, but he waits patiently, nevertheless: he cannot hurry the poor things away, he says to himself, and a few drops of rain more or less won't signify; so he looks on, and shakes his head, and his eyes moisten with a kind sympathy and pity. For the children have stood by the brink of their father's grave clasping each other's hands desolately, till the sounds of the funeral tones have ceased; and then, looking round and seeing only an old man near them, they fall into each other's arms and give way to a paroxysm of pent-up lamentation, in sobs and cries.

"Don't-ee cry so, don't-ee, then, poor little dears!" says the grave-digger, drawing his mouldy hand across his own eyes; "he's gone to a better place, you know, children," says he. "Well, well,"

he adds presently, "perhaps it ull do-ee good to cry your cry out—so, so!" And having said this, his feeble attempts at consolation are exhausted, and he falls back.

The young mourners do not heed him, though they hear his words, but it does them good to shed those tears and give utterance to those cries, despairing as they are; and now they have quieted themselves, and together they cast one long, long, loving look into that cold grave. The orphans then slowly withdraw, and the sexton—waiting still till they are out of sight—commences his work, and speedily fills up the grave.

Shift the scene, my friends, to one of a suite of three small rooms, high up in the third story of a small house in one of the back streets of that town. The orphans are there, the violence of grief has, for the time, subsided; the girl has removed her outward habiliments, and is seated, her brother by her side, near to a cheerful fire. An elderly woman has passed in and out, giving a helping hand, and uttering now and then a few commonplace words of consolation; but now she has left them to themselves, telling them to be sure to call her if they want anything else done for them.

You can see the girl's face and form, now that she has removed her bonnet and shawl. She is pale and thin and delicate. Her features are small and regular; she is slightly made and apparently fragile; her manner—it is habitual with her—is quiet and pensive; her skin is fair, her hands are soft and well formed, her fingers slender; and when she speaks, there is a thrilling tenderness in her musical voice, which adds to the interest which you feel in the young orphan.

You turn to her brother: he is like his sister in countenance, and like her too in the tones of his voice and in the correctness of his pronunciation when he speaks. If born to poverty, they were not brought up in rude ignorance and neglect—you are sure of that.

You look around you. The room is scantily furnished. There is a square scrap of threadbare carpet, covering perhaps one third of the floor; there is a common table, and there are a few chairs of ordinary description and old. There are some rough book-shelves against the wall, fastened there, you can see, in untaught and unapt domestic carpentry, and on the shelves are rows of books which tell a tale of better or more hopeful days, and other accessories: there are a few ornaments on the mantel-piece, of no great money value, but which display discriminating and cultivated taste. Above these hangs a silver watch, such as, in those days, would scarcely have been carried by any but a gentleman, and appended to it is a slight gold chain and key and seal. The watch is silent—it has not been wound up for many days.

Listen, the girl is speaking. "We must not give way to sorrow, Willy: the old man who spoke to us in the churchyard—" her voice breaks down here for a moment, but she struggles nobly, and overcomes her emotion—"told us that our father is 'gone to a better place,' but he did not know that what he said was true. We do know it, Willy,

for we know how good he was, how he loved the Bible, how he trusted in God and loved prayer, and believed in Jesus. We know all this, Willy, and we should be glad."

"Glad!" says the boy, rather reproachfully, and in a tone of grief mixed with a little impatience; "glad, Mary! when we are left alone in the world, so poor as we are, too!" and he burst into fresh tears.

"Not glad that our dear father is dead, Willy; that cannot be," and she throws her arm round her brother's neck and kisses him again and again; "I mean, we cannot be glad for our own sakes, but we may be for *his*. And we are not alone in the world, Willy; God will take care of us."

"I don't know how," says the boy, for rebellion and unbelief were busy in his young heart then; "can you tell me how, Mary?"

"No, darling; how can I tell what God will do, or how he will do it? but you know what our father said—that last—last day when——" and she could not go on for sobs.

"This is wrong of me," she says at length, drying her eyes; "I ought to set you a better example, Willy. And I am sure God will help us somehow; but we must try to help ourselves as well. Look," she went on, "I did not mean to talk about these things to-day, but I do not think it is wrong;" and as she speaks, she takes a purse from her pocket, and empties it in her lap, and shows several pieces of gold and a quantity of silver. "This is all we have got in the world, Willy, but it is all our own, for there is nothing to be paid for only the—the undertaker's bill," she can hardly get out that word, but she does, and goes on quickly, "and that will not be much. And then there are the books and the little furniture—and that, yes, that is nearly all; but then it is better than if we were quite destitute, you know: it will give me time to try for work, and old Betty and Mr. Underwood have promised to help me. Don't cry, dear, dear Willy, my darling brother;" and she breaks off from what she is saying to comfort her brother; and so the day wears on, and night comes, and they sleep in spite of care and sorrow.

Days and weeks and months pass away, and the orphans struggle on. They are unknown: the only hearts to feel for them are those of the landlord in whose house they live, and who keeps an old book-shop below, and his old housekeeper, Betty. They are poor also, and cannot help the children much, either by purse or influence; but Mary is brave-hearted, industrious, and willing. She obtains work—very poor work and very poorly paid—but she plies her needle actively, and she earns, alas! not so much as is needed for her brother's support and her own. So, little by little her purse has become empty, and most of her father's books have been sold to the poor second-hand bookseller below. He has given a good price for them—more than he could afford, nay, he has sold them at a loss; but the price was little. Furniture has gone too, save the few articles which cannot be done without, and the money obtained for it has wasted away.

Poor Willy has tried to get employment, but he has failed; and he has grown thin, and tall, and pale. His clothes are outgrown, and Mary cannot replace them; she cannot replenish her own scanty and failing wardrobe; both Mary and Willy get shabbier and shabbier, but Mary still hopes and believes that God will help them, is helping them always, has not forgotten them, will not forsake them if they do not forsake him.

And she does not forsake him. She learns to know more of him. She makes his word her delight and her counsellor. She believes. Yes, there is faith in her heart, and love, and hope, and resignation, and patience.

It is not exactly thus with Willy. He loves his sister dearly, but he has gradually grown morose to all besides, and unbelieving too. "If God can help, why doesn't he?" he petulantly asks, "and not let Mary be wearing herself out, earning sometimes not sixpence a-day, and me going everywhere begging for work, and not able to get it? If God cares for us, as Mary says," he goes on, "why did he let our father die? and why does he not let some of the people who read the books our father wrote, and who praise them, and the booksellers who are making money by selling them, and the publishers who boast how many editions they have published—I say, why does not God let these people know that the poor dead author's children are half-starving?"

Poor Willy, it would not be difficult to answer him, perhaps; and he is sometimes answered by the strong faith and trust of his sister; but he is hard to be persuaded.

CHAPTER XIX.—THE ORPHANS.—THE POOR CLERK AND HIS LANDLORD.

I AM afraid, too, (continued Sixpence's amanuensis, pursuing the theme,) that Willy gets into bad company sometimes. He does not want to remember that his father was a gentleman, he says. Why should he? he asks; and he rambles the streets, and begins to look disreputable, and to talk slang. At last he gets into trouble, by reason of being in the society of a dishonest companion, and is sent to prison. Meanwhile, Mary, yet ignorant of her brother's unhappiness, sinking beneath her load, falls suddenly ill.

And now is seen and proved how God has cared for her and her brother too. Her illness and Willy's sorrow raises up for them powerful friends. Willy is redeemed from his short confinement, wiser and humbled. Mary is nursed and tended. Gifts are poured in upon them both; and, better than mere gifts, countenance and help. Mary is rescued from her ill-paid employ; and thenceforth, instead of working on coarse calico, her needle will pierce silk and satin. A premium is paid for her instruction, and she is received into a friendly home; while Willy, with her reluctant consent and many tears at parting, and with constant prayers for him, afterwards breathed from her full heart, becomes what he has desired to be, a sailor boy, and by favour and strong influence of his new friends is on the road to preferment in his profession.

Other months and years pass away. Look again,
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my friend. The once friendless orphan girl is befriended, admired, and loved, now that she is woman. Ten years have passed away since she and Willy stood so desolately by their father's open grave; eight years since when, but for the humaxity of her poor landlord, she would have perished for want of bread. And now Mary B— is prosperous. Her story—the story of her quiet, enduring, patient struggles—when made known, found for her friends and patrons; and her sweetness of temper, her untiring application, and her sterling worth, have retained them and enlarged their circle.

She is clever and skilful too, and tasteful as well; and the ladies whose carriages are often to be seen at her door, while they know but little of her private worth, and think little of her as an example of faith and patience and hope, wonder what they should do without Mary B—.

She has grave thoughts sometimes, but not sad ones. There is her brother at sea. Ah, but he is a comfort to her and a credit to his patrons. He has redeemed his character, and has risen in his profession, which he loves enduringly, in spite of its hardships and dangers. He is now first mate of a trading vessel which takes long voyages. He has been three times home in the eight years which have elapsed since he first stepped on deck, a boy; and his sister looks daily for his fourth visit, for nearly two years have passed away since his last return. She will not long have to bear the hope deferred. He landed not many days since, he is on the road to her now. He is sitting down to rest; he has broken in upon my long solitude, and rescued me from my lowly, undertrodden state, and brightened up my countenance. My new owner's name is William B—.

Having rested, my new owner started to his feet and pursued his journey. How his spirits rose as he drew nearer to his sister's home; how he had a friendly word for every passing stranger; how, in the exuberance of his gladness, and in anticipation of his meeting with Mary, he sang merrily as he strode over the ground; and then how, when he recalled the past, and remembered that scene by the open grave, and that other scene of deep distress and destitution, and many other times of trouble and trial, his voice sank again into silence, and his eye moistened; all this, I say, it is needless to speak of at large.

At length, as evening drew on, his journey also drew near to its termination. The large and busy town lay spread before him in its valley, with the towers and spires of its churches, illuminated by the beams of the setting sun. A few minutes more—they seemed long to him—and his feet were on the pavement of the town; a few minutes more, and he was at the door of his sister's house; another minute, and he was in her arms, clasping her in a brotherly embrace, and imprinting kisses on her fair forehead.

The poor clerk paused here. It was early in the night yet; but he had other matters in hand.

The business in hand was this. The lonely man

had that day received a small gratuity from his employers at Peggram's Wharf, in token of their approval of his diligence; and having at different times received many special kindnesses from his landlord, the little barber on the ground-floor, he had determined to stretch a point or so, and entertain Mr. Keenedge in his own room.

Not much preparation was needed. Our poor clerk's hospitable intentions were very genuine, but also simple. He had brought with him the materials for the joint repast in a little basket; and, seeing that he could not make much boast of his own accomplishments as a cook, they were already prepared for the table when purchased. It was only needful, therefore, to remove his papers and spread his cloth, and discharge the contents of his basket into two or three small dishes (borrowed), and the supper was so far ready. But, as the evening air was chilly, the poor clerk laid and lighted a fire on his rarely used hearth; and by the time the heavy damp air was expelled from the chimney, and the flames blazed up cheerily, the hour had arrived for the reception of his visitor.

Who came punctually at the appointed time. He was immensely smartened up, this little barber. He had removed his apron, and exhibited a pair of gray pantaloons, ornamented with black military stripes. He had doffed his nankeen jacket, and donned a bright blue coat with swallow tails, an extraordinarily high and stiff collar, bright shining yellow buttons, and very tight sleeves. "It was made for me," said he, later in the evening, and when he was warmed into confidential intercourse, and he said it with a gentle sigh; "it was made for me, John, when I was a young man, and was a little bit of a dandy, you know, and when I thought I was all right for—there, I may as well tell you, John, this is the very coat I was a-going to be married in, and wasn't—there."

"Why not, Mr. Keenedge?" asked the poor clerk, dreamily.

"Jilted, John, jilted. Ah, well, it was best so. I know it now, and I tried to think it then; but I didn't get over it for a while. It was a blow, you see, John; and I couldn't a-bear to look at my gay coat for a long while afterwards; I never put it on for ten whole years, and tisen't often now. I dare say it is old-fashioned, but I am old-fashioned, too; so it suits, you see."

But to return. It was in this costume that Mr. Keenedge entered the room of his lodger, bringing with him a chair, for, as before observed, the poor clerk's room boasted of but one seat.

And soon the host and his guest were seated; and the poor clerk said grace softly, and then they began, with becoming gravity, to demolish the good things before them. Not many words were spoken till the repast was over; but when the table was pushed back, and they drew near to the fire, their lips were unclosed.

"I take it very kind of you, John," said Mr. Keenedge, "that you should condescend to ask for my company at this time. I do indeed."

The poor clerk looked into his visitor's face, first with profound amazement, and then his aspect became troubled.

"For it is condescension, John," continued the little barber; "don't tell me, anybody," said he, looking round, "that I am a fit and proper person to be a-sitting and a-talking so familiar with a man as is every inch a gentleman, as was a born and bred gentleman, and——"

"Mr. Keenedge, my good friend," interposed the poor clerk with rapid utterance, "this is not right; you must not talk so extravagantly. I a gentleman! I condescend! You do not know. I am sure you do not mean it; but you do not know how much pain you give me by talking in such a manner. You do not know what I am."

"Yes, John, I do," replied Mr. Keenedge; "you are a man of a thousand, John; but I won't—there, I hadn't ought to have spoke my feelings; only I thank you, John, for being so friendly and free; there, now I have said it, and my mind is easy."

"Mr. Keenedge," said the poor clerk, after a short silence, in which his countenance seemed agitated with some secret emotions, "I never thought that I should bring myself to speak of my own history. You know, when I first took this room of you——"

"More than ten years ago, John," said the landlord.

"Yes, more than ten years ago: I told you that I was a very poor man, and unfortunate."

"You did, John," the little barber nodded; "yes, and it was easy to see that you was in great trouble. I knew it before you ever spoke. Ah! I haven't forgot the turn you gave me when you came into my little shop below, and asked to be let to shave yourself with one of my razors. 'No,' thinks I, 'not if I knows it, my friend; none of my razors goes into your hands to-day, if I knows it. If you are too poor to pay, I'll shave you for nothink, and welcome,' thinks I, and so I said, John."

"It is all true, Mr. Keenedge; and I thank you heartily now, though I was too proud to thank you then, for your kindness and caution. However, there wasn't the danger you thought of. But this is not what I was about to say. You remember that I let you shave me——"

"And you paid me, too; yes, yes; trust you for that. If it had a-been your last penny——"

"It was nearly my last penny, my friend, though I did not say so then. But I was in trouble; and your kind look gave me courage to tell you so, and to say that I wanted a lodging, the poorer and meaner the better, so that I could be alone."

"Yes, John, I remember that too; and that, seeing a card in my window, 'A room to let unfurnished for a single man,' you would like to take it."

"I told you also, Mr. Keenedge," continued the poor clerk, without noticing his friend's response, "that I could not give you any reference as to character; that I was a man almost unknown, and wished to be; that I had just obtained employment, such as it was, which would enable me to pay the rent of the room; but that I should wish to come and go unquestioned, and that no inquiry should ever be made about me by you, if no inquiry were made concerning me by others, which was not likely."

The little barber nodded. He remembered it all. "Then you asked me my name, and I said, 'My name is John.' 'Yes,' you said 'John——,' and you waited for me to fill up the blank. 'John, only John,' I said; 'John, and nothing else.'"

"I recollect it all as if it was yesterday," rejoined the landlord; "and I remember—you won't mind my saying it now, John—that I was queered a bit then. 'There isn't any honest man as need be ashamed of the name he took from his father,' I thought; 'and I don't want to have nothink to do with a man as won't own to his right name.'"

"I know you hesitated, my friend; I knew it then," continued the poor clerk, "for I watched your countenance closely; but your good nature and compassion prevailed, and I carried my point. 'Let it be John, if you will,' you said, and you took me in as your lodger, and since then I have been John—only John—to you and to all the world."

"True, true," the little barber nodded; "and I have never repented trusting to you, John."

"I am thankful for that; how thankful you cannot tell," said the poor clerk humbly. "Well, since then—more than ten years ago—you have shown me kindness on kindness."

"No, no; don't say it, John," said Mr. Keenedge, waving his hand.

"Kindness on kindness; and the greatest of all kindnesses in that you have borne with my whims, and have never sought to know more of me than you have seen."

"There hasn't been no need, John," said the landlord.

"But now," continued the poor clerk, "the time is come when I feel that I ought to return confidence for confidence. Not to-night, for I am not equal to it; but come and see me again to-morrow night, my friend, and I will tell you part of my history."

"Not if it would hurt your mind to tell it, John."

"It will, and it will not. It may relieve me," said the speaker; "and it is due to you."

TORCHLIGHT PROCESSIONS.

THE Mendelssohn Musical Festival of the 4th of May, at the Crystal Palace, was concluded by a torchlight procession. On a more recent occasion, at the opening of a public park and garden at Hull, a similar display took place—on the suggestion, we suppose, of the German residents in that town, for this is a custom which we English have lately imported from Germany. There, torchlight processions are not only offered as tributes to the illustrious dead, but also to the popular living; indeed, they seem the usual winding up of all fêtes, and are especially a passion with German students. Generally, the promenade terminates at some given spot, where the space is sufficiently large for the purpose, and each bearer dashes his torch down in a peculiar manner, to the sound of music, while they all blaze up again in one general bonfire; sometimes they sing a kind of hymn, and modulate

the sounds down lower and lower, until the fire is extinguished. Something of this kind was done at the Crystal Palace; but there they performed some evolutions, no doubt because the line of march was not sufficiently long to give the visitors time enough to see the effect of the light upon surrounding objects.

When seen for the first time, the effect is peculiarly solemn, particularly when accompanied with a full military band. This many of our tourists must have felt, as they have an opportunity of witnessing a most imposing display at Frankfort, in the month of August, on the anniversary of the birth of the Emperor of Austria. The soldiers' black steeds, bright helmets, and long white cloaks there, add very much to the effect; but the most beautiful part of it few see, for most are generally contented with watching the procession pass slowly under their windows.

On the soldiers' return to their barracks, which are situated at Stockhausen on the opposite bank of the Maine, they all throw their torches into the river, the instant they reach the centre of the bridge; and as they drop down, two and two, the long white cloaks which are in advance look still more solemn, illuminated by the uncertain light behind. This, a little cynical French artist, who had to flee from Paris in 1848, openly declared in a large party, mostly composed of Germans, to be the only sight that had interested him in Germany.

The Frankfurters still boast of one famous midnight promenade in the depth of winter, which took place about four years ago; the sledges extended from the middle of the town to the forest, or, as we should say, "the wood," for the trees by no means merit the grand rank in which they hold them. The distance is rather more than two English miles. The snow had been lying on the ground for many weeks; the sledges were either new, or else newly decorated for the occasion; most of the horses were adorned with feathers; and when the vast fortunes of the bankers and merchants there are taken into consideration, it may be well imagined what the effect must have been.

The inhabitants of the free towns of Frankfort and Hamburg always seem to be vying with the royal cities in splendour and show. Our own much-talked-of royal procession on the course at Ascot is more than rivalled at the little court of Hanover, even on any military occasion; indeed, it seems a perfect marvel how it is all supported; for carriages and four, red and gold liveries, silk stockings, and outriders, are as plentiful as blackberries in September. Frederick the Great, in the first book he ever published, made a capital *exposé* of the love of show at the German courts, more particularly intended for Saxe-Weimar, which, in his day, made royal displays on wonderfully small means.

Torchlight processions are more in favour in university towns, where they serve as a sort of excitement to the students. Every opportunity is seized upon for getting them up; the successes of friends, or their death, are both equally made subservient for a sort of fête. There was an example of the latter kind about two years back, which must have struck those who witnessed it as peculiarly sad.

A young man of very high attainments, but of humble parentage, was attacked with consumption, which carried him off, after intense suffering, as it had done with his father, a brother, and a sister. His fellow students, wishing to show their affection for him, and admiration of his talents, determined upon giving him an honourable burial. Accordingly, he was borne to the cemetery, a distance of more than a mile, by four students, at nine o'clock on a cold bleak evening in January, preceded and followed by a host of others, each carrying a torch, while a band played, and the church bells rang a sort of funeral peal; and the poor lone mother sat in her desolate home, weeping for the lost one, who was her last support. Prudent folks whispered that the money so lavishly spent to get up a show, and amuse the thoughtless survivors, might have been better bestowed upon the childless widow; but we can't make all the world think as we do. Besides, our charity balls, it is sad to say, are very nearly akin to such processions: many would not give their money to the charity if they were not lured to do so by the prospect of pleasure to themselves. Besides, we don't know but many of the students may have given their mite: there is many a good deed done privately, of which the gossips know nothing.

But students' freaks are generally looked upon with a very lenient eye, even by those who have been inconvenienced by them.

If a lady were sitting quietly in her carriage before a shop door in London, waiting for a friend, and the doors of her carriage were simultaneously opened, and a long train of young men were to walk through it, each raising his cap to the lady with the greatest gravity as he passed, the people in the street would instantly interfere, a policeman would be sent for, and there would be a row; but this once actually occurred at Gottingen! The lady having had time to recover from her surprise at the ever-continuing visits, at last burst into a hearty laugh, which soon became general; the doors were then closed again, and they all disappeared somewhere behind the carriage.

It appears strange to English ears to hear constantly of "students" and "college educations" among the sons of what we consider "the people," but they are very common in Germany. Students' lodgings may be had in university towns for a mere song. Some of them, it must be confessed, are dreary-looking enough; but there the students toil on indefatigably, often with credit to themselves, but frequently at a greater cost than their friends at home are well able to meet, or at all bargained for.

Apart from their love for and consumption of beer, they are no poor patrons of coffee. The end of most of their walks is some romantic spot where it can be obtained, and they need certainly not give up the palm to the French for the knowledge of the art of making good coffee. It cannot, however, be called a national taste, for we are told by one of the popular writers of the day, that it was quite unknown to the people before the time of their darling, Frederick the Great, his haughty predecessors having always reserved the right of drink-

ing it entirely to the royal family, or those immediately in attendance on them.

At most of the public gardens where concerts are given, coffee is now the only refreshment; there are, however, others, over the entrance to which "Bier-Keller" is printed in large letters, literally "Beer-cellar;" but the building from which it is supplied is not unfrequently a Swiss cottage, or something equally romantic, and tables are ranged for the customers on terraces one above the other, where the wine is flourishing in all its beauty.

The members of the different colleges mostly keep to their particular "beer-cellars," which they have generally supported from generation to generation; and after the lectures they may be seen streaming into them, talking and laughing, certainly with more vivacity than is generally attributed to their national character. Should the owners of these places change their locality or give up business, a demonstration is immediately got up—perhaps a farewell dinner, or a tilting match. A stranger who had not been previously informed, would imagine that something very extraordinary was going to take place, on seeing some eight or ten mounted cavaliers, with coloured scarfs and flying banners, followed by all the public carriages which they have been able to seize for the occasion. Into these from one to four scramble, the whole being brought up with a great team, drawn by as many horses as can be begged or borrowed, in part of which some rather indifferent musicians are seated, the remaining space being filled with barrels of beer. Thus the "cellar" is patronized to the very last moment. Sometimes the return is effected quietly, sometimes by torchlight.

In a country where horses do scarcely any of the field labour, (as in Heidelberg, for instance,) they are not easily procured, and the most sorry looking animals head these gullant processions, and discompose their riders' equanimity to a fearful extent. There the poor oxen are cruelly used, only two being generally employed to drag masses of stone from a quarry, situated on one of the highest hills; the roads, however, are beautiful, and must excite the admiration even of the English, who have good reason to be proud of their public causeways. To add to the misery of the poor animals, they are actually fastened down by the horns to the shafts of the cart.

But they don't ill-use all their animals in the like manner, for in the north, horses are fattened up for food. In the daily papers, which are more than half filled with advertisements, and supplied at the charge of sixpence per month, a fine, fat, frisky-looking horse frequently heads an announcement to "sausage makers," that on such a day the same will be killed, when they are requested to make timely application. These sausages, and others made from pigs' liver, form a never failing resource to thrifty housewives who find themselves suddenly in want of an extra dish; let those eat them who can; where beef and mutton may be had as good even as in England, there is choice for all.

Torchlight processions, as we have previously said, seem to be most in favour in university towns; for there they may be made to serve two

purposes—either to do honour to a favourite, or to spite his rival. If a professor be chosen for either of the colleges, who has in any way made himself obnoxious, a demonstration is immediately got up in honour of the most favoured one, frequently to his very great surprise and annoyance. The ladies of the family dilate with great bitterness upon the expense and inconvenience which these fluttering visits entail upon the household, such as blackened ceilings, soiled curtains, and a score of other minor domestic grievances, too long to relate here, but hard to be borne by those who have no part in the pageant.

There are more heavy expenses than these. When the procession arrives at the residence of the popular individual, he has to appear at an open window or balcony, to bow to those below. A few are then admitted, who are treated to choice wines and other dainties, and while the address is being read, the torch-bearers below keep dashing the sooty things against the ground, or the house, as the case may be, for they have to return in the same order in which they came. One lecturer had no less than four such processions in his honour in a very short space of time, out of pure disinterested goodwill. The damage, therefore, done to his property was naturally not very trifling; for his house was situated in a very narrow street, and the high garden wall which fronted it, and was on most occasions of a tolerably pure white, formed a too ready means for keeping up the brightness of the torches. Those who looked at them at the Crystal Palace were at a comfortable distance; let them beware how they ever get nearer.

ROBERT STEPHENSON.

At the period when the Americans were fighting their way to become a great independent cotton-growing nation—just after the completion of remarkable mechanical inventions at home for the preparation of the downy material, the spinning-jenny, water-frame, and mule-jenny, with the improved steam engine—just before horse posts, loitering at every village inn to gossip with "mine host" or the ostler, began to be superseded on the highroads by mail coaches for the conveyance of letters, travelling some six miles an hour—about the time that Sunday-school instruction dawned in its blessedness upon the land—and the very year that Herschel doubted the known bounds of the solar universe—George Stephenson was born. We string these facts together, because he lived to achieve no mean victory over space and time by quickening locomotion; alter postal arrangements completely; render tens of thousands of juveniles belonging to the impoverished classes happy excursionists on their school holiday, passing from dingy towns to the clear streams, green fields, and sylvan scenes of the country; and because the great work of his life, the First Grand Experimental Railway, was originally conceived with no other object in view than that of facilitating the transport of cotton from the quays of Liverpool to the factories of Manchester.



BIRTH-PLACE OF ROBERT STEPHENSON, WILLINGTON QUAY, (NOW PULLED DOWN.)

"His task has lessen'd labour, vanquish'd space;
And through remotest years, beheld afar,
His spirit leaves her everlasting trace,
Where'er impetuous speeds the fiery car."

Mark the spot where, in the family Bible of a Northumbrian couple in the humblest social position at Wylam colliery, near Newcastle, the record was entered of their second child, George—"born June, 9 day, 1781;" and be willing to render all possible aid to the development of every child, however poor the homestead and lowly the condition. Little thought father and mother, if an answer could have been returned to the question, "What manner of child shall this be?" that it would have indicated one combining the most invincible resolution, with patient painstaking and marvellous capacity, the fruit of which has been a total revolution in the internal communications of the civilized world, and a name henceforth

"In our island history enrolled,
Among the glorious dead,
The mighty forgotten men of old."

Life was a hard up-hill trudge for boy, youth, and man for many a weary year. Yet on he went gallantly, as if a consciousness possessed him of a high destiny hinging upon surmounting the difficulties incident to straitened circumstances, which inspired the resolution to strain every nerve in the grapple with them rather than be defeated. Many were the avocations successfully followed, and multifarious the handicrafts incidentally mastered. Originally a cowherd, then a hoer of turnips, next a clearer of coal from stones and dross, he was promoted, at the age of fourteen, to be

assistant to his honest old father, who was fireman at a colliery pumping-engine, then appointed plugman at 12s. a week, and next breaksman at nearly 20s.; while to a night school he repaired to learn reading, writing, and arithmetic, and exhaust the accomplishments of its master. At the same time he contrived to be proficient in cutting out suits of clothes, which the colliers' wives made up for their husbands, making shoes and lasts, mending clocks and watches, and became so well up in the latter art and mystery as to be known to common fame as the best clock-doctor in the north country. Such a man,

"O'er whose young morn
Cold penury her wintry shadows threw,
Alone in toil, in contumely, and scorn,
Still to his heaven-appointed mission true,"

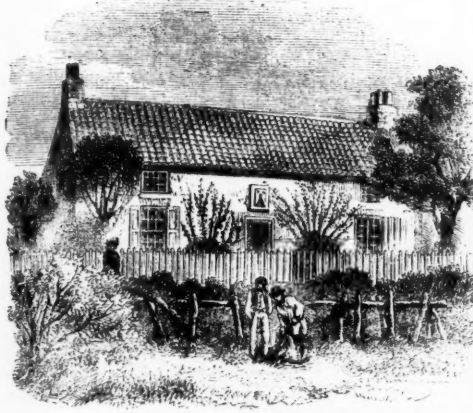
deserved to succeed; and never was success in great ends more complete than his.

Twenty-one years had passed away, when the breaksman entered Newburn church with pretty Fanny Henderson, about to become his wife. Poor Robert Gray was there likewise to act the part of bridesman, and had a pension ultimately bequeathed to him for life for his services. Joyfully the young husband, with his bride behind him on a pillion, took her on horseback to his home, then at Willington Quay, on the north bank of the Tyne, about six miles from Newcastle. Mark another spot, as unpretentious as the preceding. In the second story of this house, and in the room lighted by the window next to that built up with brickwork, the wife became a mother, and gave birth to a boy, Robert, worthy his sire's renown, who lived to

send the locomotive whistling through the land of the Pharaohs, span the mighty St. Lawrence, and leave monuments of his constructive ability upon four continents. This house no longer exists. It was taken down to make way for the Stephenson Memorial Institute, and we cannot but regret that its removal was considered necessary. Nor refrain we from expressing the natural wish, that Fanny Henderson had survived to witness the fame of her

he might be seen morning and evening cantering to and from school at Newcastle, with his wallet of provisions for the day, and bag of books slung over his shoulder.

School-days were followed by an apprenticeship to the well-known Nicholas Wood, as an under coal-viewer, at Killingworth; and at this subterranean occupation some three years were passed, not without the experience of great peril. Once, while with



COTTAGE AT KILLINGWORTH, AND SUN-DIAL OVER DOOR, MADE BY ROBERT STEPHENSON.

husband and son, and share their prosperity. But she died when the child was too young to appreciate the bereavement, and for a time the loss of his first love covered the father's hearth with darkness.

Robert Stephenson was born on the 16th of December, 1803. Cast upon the sole care of his father in tender years, he was almost constantly by his side, watching him while poring over models, plans, drawings, and diagrams, and while attending to the details of practical engineering. His boyhood was passed at West Moor, Killingworth colliery, seven miles north of Newcastle, where the elder Stephenson laid the broad foundation of his lofty renown while an engine-wright in the service of Lord Ravensworth. The cottage he occupied still stands, with the sun-dial over the door, the joint work of the inmates. Having procured a copy of Ferguson's "Astronomy," the boy drew out on paper, under his father's direction, a dial suited to the latitude of Killingworth. A stone proper for the purpose was then obtained, and, after much hewing and polishing, the stone dial was fixed in front of the cottage, to the wonderment of the villagers. It bears the date, "August 11th, MDCCCXVI." Mary now alive in the neighbourhood can well remember Robert, dressed in a homespun coat of George's own cut, full of life and fond of pranks, which, however, had generally some intelligent object in view. On one occasion the sire found the mischievous youngster busily engaged, by means of a kite, in imitating Franklin's experiment, and drawing down electric sparks into the hind quarters of his pony. On this pony



COTTAGE AT WYLLAM: BIRTH-PLACE OF GEORGE STEPHENSON.

the master and a fellow workman in an unfrequented part of the pit, there was an explosion of fire-damp. Instantly the party were blown down, and the lights extinguished. They were a mile away from the shaft, and quite in the dark. Robert and his comrade, under the first impulse, on recovering, ran towards the shaft at full speed, till the latter halted, saying, "Stop, laddie, stop, we maun gang back, and seek the maister." Gallantly they returned, and rescued him, stunned and bruised, from danger. As the father's circumstances improved, the son's prospects brightened; and, to qualify him for a higher position, he was taken from coal-viewing, and sent in the year 1820, at the age of seventeen, to the University of Edinburgh. Only the expense of a single session could be afforded. But so diligently was it improved, that at the end of six months he came back with the prize for mathematics, and with the better prize of the knowledge how to teach himself.

At this period, the elder Stephenson was engaged in surveying a line for the Stockton and Darlington railway, the first iron road constructed for the purposes of general traffic, and the first public highway on which locomotive engines were regularly employed, but originally intended to be worked by horse-power. Robert trudged by his side, entering the figures while his father took the sights. They began their task with the first blush of dawn, and continued it till dusk, taking their chance of getting bread and milk for refreshment, or a homely dinner in some cottage by the wayside. Eager discussions passed between the two respecting the locomotive, as alterations and improvements in matters

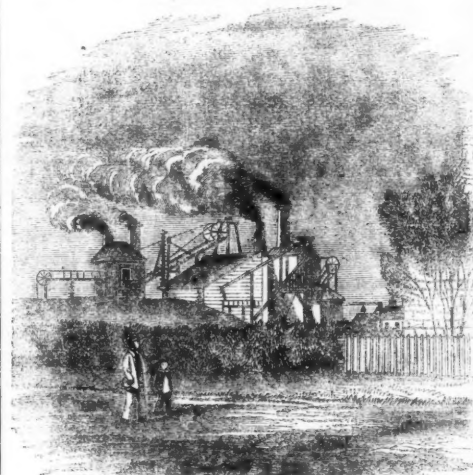
of detail were suggested; but both agreed in confident anticipations of its ultimate triumph over every other species of tractive power on railways. After assisting for a short time in the steam-engine manufactory, then in its infancy at Newcastle, Robert Stephenson accepted a mining appointment in South America, as it was conceived that the voyage thither, with change of climate, would be of service to his health, injured by severe application. From this engagement, which extended over three years, he returned towards the close of 1827, meeting with a singular adventure by the way.

Having reached Carthage, on the Gulf of Darien, he was compelled to halt in that miserable town, one of the strongholds of the yellow fever, awaiting a ship to convey him to New York. In the comfortless public room of the wretched inn, he met with an Englishman, tall, gaunt, and careworn, evidently in the last stage of impoverishment. The stranger proved to be a brother engineer, well known by name, Mr. Richard Trevithick, the Don Ricardo Trevithick of Peruvian celebrity, to whom we have had occasion to refer.* All the brilliant prospects placed before him by the authorities of that country, founded upon the drainage of the silver mines by steam-power, had been utterly disappointed; and he was making his way to England almost penniless, a living example of the truth of the Spanish proverb, that "a silver mine brings misery, a gold mine ruin." It was a most fortunate meeting for him, for he was at once relieved of further embarrassment by an advance of £50. The parties were soon in earnest conversation upon a subject in which both took the deepest interest—the steam-horse. But Trevithick's ideas never went beyond a steam-carriage adapted for use on common roads, an example of which, as successful as any other, he had invented and patented before Robert Stephenson was born. Coleridge used to tell an anecdote with great glee respecting this machine, during a trial of it, in an obscure district of Cornwall, by the inventor and his partner Vivian. While at the top of its speed, they suddenly saw a closed toll-bar before them. Vivian called to Trevithick, who was behind, to slacken speed; but the momentum was so great, that the engine was only brought to a stand close to the gate, which the keeper quickly threw open in utter consternation. "What's to pay?" shouted Vivian. But not a word could the man articulate. "What's to pay?" was again demanded. "No-noth-nothing to pay," he at last replied, shaking from top to toe; "do, my de-dear Mr. Devil, drive on as fast as you can; no-thing to pay." It is remarkable of the two Englishmen who so unexpectedly met at Carthage, that some sixteen years previous, Trevithick had exhibited his steam-carriage in the metropolis, which conveyed a load of passengers in an inclosed piece of ground near Euston Square—the very spot from which, seven years later, Stephenson started the North Western Railway.

On returning from the western world, Robert Stephenson again joined the factory at Newcastle. He had indeed been expressly recalled to aid his

father with the locomotive, and prepare the iron steel for the opening day of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, the 15th of September, 1825. The triumph then was complete. Though clouded by the melancholy accident to Mr. Haskisson, yet that event served to illustrate its efficiency, for, to obtain medical help, the wounded body of the statesman was conveyed some fifteen miles in twenty-five minutes, or at the rate of thirty-six miles an hour—a speed which came upon the world with the surprise of a new and unlooked-for phenomenon. From this period, the establishment at Newcastle took a start as a manufactory of locomotives; it became one of the largest and most famous in the world, as it still is, sending out engines, as railways spread, to the various countries of Europe and the United States of America.

[To be continued.]



THE ENGINE-HOUSE AT KILLINGWORTH COLLIERY.

SKYE: FROM THE TOP OF CUCHULLIN.

PART II.

On the far west, the Atlantic was scarcely hidden from us by the low-lying islands of North and South Uist, on which kelp fires were now sending forth long streams of smoke. North of these lay a more mountainous island, the upper part of which is called Lewis, and the lower, wilder, and more interesting, Harris. These are the Hebrides, or, if Skye be also admitted into their number, the Outer Hebrides. The word is literally a *mistake*, and has no meaning; it arose from some typographical error in reading the true name—Hebudes. On the south, and near us, were the Islands Canna, Rum, and Eigg, with its queer-looking scarr, something like a camel's hunch. The mainland from north to south presented almost every variety of surface. Here parallel vertebræ of mountain groups ran down to the sea; there a loch thrust itself for miles into the interior: here a crest rose eccentric and defiant; there a ridge, smooth, regular, and sloping, prostrated itself before some tyrant peak. East of us and almost at our feet, marked

* No. 389. "First Steam Engine in South America."

by its ruined fort of Castle Moil on our island, and by its light-house on the opposite shore, was the narrow strait, called Kyle-akin, the northern outlet of the Sound of Sleat, which separates Skye from the mainland. A schooner or two was passing through this close channel.

Roughly speaking, the geology of Skye may be said to consist of trap. Trappa is Scandinavian for "stair," and looking northwards we at once saw the propriety of the term, as the various somewhat interesting-looking hills rose in wide sloping terraces, and at last often, as would naturally happen, became tables. It is remarked that these tabulated mountains often appear in pairs; and there is a notable instance of this on the north-west portion of the island, at the head of Loch Follart, and opposite to Dunvegan Castle, the seat of the Macleods, where there rise two of these fraternal mountains, which go by the name of Macleod's Tables. On their western side, some distance into the sea, some most curious rocks rise up from the water, bare, rough, slender, detached from each other, and the highest said to be 200 feet above the water, which, however, is gradually grinding them away. They are called Macleod's Maidens, and resemble the Needles off the Isle of Wight. In his account of a visit to Dunvegan Castle, Sir Walter Scott makes two amusing mistakes, when he says that from the castle he beheld "that part of the Cuchullin mountains which are called, from their form, Macleod's Dining Tables." First, you cannot see the Cuchullins from the castle; next, the tables are as much a part of the Cuchullins as the dome of St. Paul's is of Westminster Abbey.

The uninteresting appearance of the northern part of Skye is broken by a most remarkable exception to the general roundness or flatness of the mountains. On the western side, high up above the sea, and the base on which it stands, washed by it, there points skywards a rock, bare as a bone, almost as sharp as a church spire, and considerably out of the perpendicular. It is the Storr Rock. To a playful imagination it might seem as if one of the Cuchullin tops had been transported thither; or rather, as if the neighbouring tabled mountains had been all deprived of their proper summits, which had been placed on the Cuchullin ridge, while the Storr alone had been allowed to retain its pinnacle. There is more than one peak, but the one I have mentioned is so prominent as to serve for a landmark.

And the sea view! What is there in the sea that constitutes the magnificence of its panorama, if one may so express it? Not the blending, contrast, or changing of its colours; not the white crests that top the blue or green waves; not the shadows that flit across its face; not its mirror-like smoothness; nor its ripple, nor its tumult, nor its expanse, nor its contractions where it meets some mountain shore; not its liberty in the ocean, nor its confinement in the loch; not its ships, nor fowl, nor islands; in none of these, nor even perhaps in the combination of these, lies the magic charm of a sea view. Is it the associations which stand connected with the sea, and which appeal so strongly to the human breast? Or is the explanation simply that, to the

sea God has given beauty, and to man an eye that can enjoy it?

The reader may imagine how well our scene was provided with sea, when he learns that though its extreme breadth is about forty-five miles, and its extreme width twenty-four, there is no spot in Skye which is five miles distant from the sea, so cleft is it with creeks and lochs.

Of course this affects the occupations of the people. Fish may be had in any abundance, though occasionally the herring season disappoints their expectations. Some additional capital and enterprise on the part of the people would make the fisheries a much more profitable source of wealth than they now are. Perhaps the inhabitants depend more on their little holdings of land for their livelihood than on the fruits of the sea; and so, owing to the dampness of the climate and the lateness and consequent coldness of their harvest time, they often are scantily provided for the year, and do indeed, especially in the spring, suffer great privations, as their looks too frequently betoken. Their cottages are most wretched. Often floorless and chimneyless, and (at best) inadequately windowed, they almost elevate the cottages of English villages into palaces. If, on entering one, you do not want to spend the first minutes in a fit of coughing, you had best squat down on the earthen floor, and so breathe beneath the smoke region. Cleanliness is, of course, out of the question. Notwithstanding their poverty, however, the Skye folk can hardly be persuaded to emigrate, and servants will often leave good situations in English families to return to their native homes and discomforts. Skye is very healthy. That ingredient in the atmosphere, ozone, which the reader may have seen attended in the meteorological reports of the newspapers by some decimal fraction, is here detected in great force. An officer in H. M.'s navy, on surveying service, informed me that he had never found it so abundant as in the air of Skye, and in the more western island of North Uist.

Skye is divided into seven parishes; but even since the erection of additional kirks by the Free Church, the public means of grace are not easy of access to many of the inhabitants, who are sometimes miles distant from any place of worship. My gilly told me that there was no kirk within eight or nine miles from the hamlet of Seonser, where he lived, and that, as he had to cross the sea to get to his, it was only in fine weather he could go. There was, however, a schoolmaster in Seonser, who held some kind of service on the Sunday.

We have already noticed the more distant objects; let us now look more to our feet. The little inn which we had left in the morning stands near the entrance of a glen, which runs in a south-westerly direction across the island, terminating at its western extremity at Camasunary on Loch Scavaig. This is Glen Sligachan. It separates the ridge we had ascended from another line of mountains, beginning with bell-shaped Glamaig and Marscow, near the inn, and ending with bold and stupendous Blaven over Loch Scavaig. Glamaig and Marscow strike the most ordinary observer as altogether different from the Cuchul-

lin. Those two are red, these are black; those are rounded like a dome, these are pointed as pinnacles; those are a conglomeration of large and small shingle, these are a huge unbroken mass; those are as flesh, these are as bones.

Ben Blaven, though on the opposite side of the glen, and apparently almost connected with the red lumps of Glamaig and Marscow, is yet of the same character, geologically and picturesquely, as the mountains from which it is separated. Black, bare, abrupt, though not so pointed as the Cuchullins proper, to them it clearly belongs.

The rock of which the Cuchullins may be said to be composed is called hypersthene, a name expressly invented for the mountains by Dr. Macculloch some thirty-five years ago. It is of adamantine hardness. Crystals of hypersthene are also found in the massive pavemental rocks themselves, if I may be allowed the word. Try and hammer off the crystals from the rock in which they are imbedded, and you may wound your hand with a splinter or two, but your hammer will make but little impression on the hypersthene, which, indeed, derives its name from its *immense strength*. Professor J. Forbes calls it* the "most solid of all rock formations." Yet, all over this district, you may trace long veins of claystone circulating through this adamantine rock. These veins often intersect each other, and so form squares and parallelograms; so that there was a time when even these rocks of iron were refit like a biscuit, and the chinks have been, as it were, perpetuated by the infusion of the liquid claystone. There are appearances also of the primitive fluidity of the hypersthene itself, veins of hypersthene having been found, as Professor Forbes believed he did, in the surrounding trap; for the hypersthenic rock lies upon that same trap which forms the island's foundations. In one portion of the Cuchullins the trap has been discovered at a height of above 2000 feet.

The peak of Scur-na-gillean is considered about 3200 feet above the level of the sea. Other neighbouring peaks are supposed to be of nearly the same elevation. Ben Blaven also, the other side of the glen, is by some considered as a rival to its brethren, the Cuchullins—an idea indignantly scouted by my proud gilly as derogatory to our present position. It was rather mischievous of us to inform him of it.

As I remember the glories of the scene and the delights of our elevation, I don't seem to myself to have made a sufficiently long stay on the top. But we had considerable work before us yet, and we were therefore compelled to think of descending.

My guide had been compelled to relinquish the idea that we were the first who had ever succeeded in reaching the exact summit, by finding, close to the top, a rusty hob-nail; yet he would not descend without forming his initials with pebbles on the peak. When he had done this, we turned our backs on Glen Sligachan, and began to dive down into that scene of desolation I have already mentioned, called Hart-o-Corry. We did not, however,

descend into the bottom of the basin, but, keeping at a considerable height above it, we pursued a more easterly course, and at last descended into that valley which I have already mentioned as opening from Glen Sligachan into Hart-o-Corry. We passed "the bloody stone" in the vale, the scene of a horrid murder a long time ago; indeed, I think my guide said a double murder was done there. I think there is no doubt that the easier way to ascend Scur-na-gillean is by the way we came down; that is, to go up from "the bloody stone." I do not believe that we met with anything in our descent which would be insuperable in going up.

Again we had to climb, but met with nothing worth recording till we reached the scene which alone is sufficient to bring hundreds to this island every year, and which alone is sufficient recompense for all the toil of travel. We at length stood over Loch Coruisk, about its middle, and on a portion of the mountain called Strona-strea. This is not indeed the best side to see it, for you do not have the fantastic and stupendous Cuchullins for your background, as you have when coming upon it from the landing-place on Loch Scavaig, or even when reaching the spot to which the guides bring their parties from Sligachan. We were, moreover, too far above the loch to appreciate the effect produced by the masses of rock that lie strewn about its margin, of every size and shape, and in every position. Some are so imbedded or firmly lodged, that no giant—not Cuchullin himself—could communicate the slightest thrill to them: some are so delicately poised that a child might rock them, though their weight may be reckoned by tons. And all these rocks are jumbled and tumbled about in indescribable confusion, and are unrelieved with one green tuft to soothe your amazement.

Yet we were not too high to enjoy the scene nevertheless, and especially the sea view. The hues around were no longer of the colourless noon-day sun, but of the sun as it nears its bed; and we lay, soothed by the repose into which nature seemed to be sinking, calmly enjoying the sweetness of the scene, all the more delightful after the wildness and weirdness of our late route and eminence. But these hues hinted that we had better be starting innwards. We felt compelled to turn our backs on scenes which have drawn out the praises of all that have an eye for beauty, and a heart that can sympathize with nature. Sir Walter Scott owes some of his most beautiful lines to the inspirations of the locality—(they are too long to quote, but may be found in the "Lord of the Isles"); and Cuchullin is the very name of one of Ossian's heroes.

It was my third visit to the spot, my third route, my third manner of seeing it. First, I had started from Sligachan, passing through its glen to Camasunary, and then over and to the top of Trodhu, at the southern extremity of Coruisk, and between it and the sea. On that occasion, a few clouds, light yet opaque, floated about, now concealing the tops of the mountains, and now descending or rising so as to reveal them. The

* In a paper appended to Black's "Guide to Skye," to which the reader is referred for a fuller account of the geology of the Cuchullins.

second time, I had landed from Loch Scavaig, when mists and rain had given those gloomy desolations an extra gloom—not therefore altogether disappointing, though effectually shutting out the heights above. But this time and this route and this manner surpassed the former ones.

Yet we must leave. Turning our backs on the loch and on the sea, we set our faces in a north-easterly direction, and began to cross large masses of hypersthene rock, which constitutes a pavement that is never to be worn out, even if it should be submitted to a Cheapside traffic. Much of interest stands connected with that same hypersthene pavement. Veins of sandstone traverse it, filling up a thousand fissures. Crystals lie on its surface, so imbedded that scarcely any force can detach them. But the chief interest of these rocks is the evidence they afford of the action of glaciers. What gave them their round smoothness? *Weather* has so little effect upon the hypersthene, that even where large fragments are found detached, no grit is sprinkled beneath them. It cannot be the torrents, that are so precipitous as to be full one moment and almost empty the next; and there are no reservoirs to retain the rain till a sufficient body of water is formed to feed the watercourses, and produce the force necessary for the effects noticed. And how is it, also, that the clay-stone veins are *flush* with the hypersthene rocks they traverse? As an explanation, the glacier theory is adopted. We learn from present existing glaciers in the Alps, etc., the effects that are now being slowly produced by their action: in these Cuchullins and other mountainous districts we trace marks similar to those which the Alpine glaciers leave behind them; and, though no human life—scarcely the whole epoch of authentic history—is long enough to register anything approaching to the effects that have been produced in the Cuchullins, yet it is believed that it is only a sufficiently long period of time that is needed, for masses of ice in slow motion to round and groove by abrasion these rocks as they are now seen.

Our path lay for some distance up and down these glacier-moulded formations; but, at last, our final descent began. We crossed the morass in the glen below, and reached the rough road that, alternating with shingle and bog, leads to Sligachan. The glen itself is a sight well worth a journey. It may hold its own with Glencoe, and is often thought superior to it. We had joined it about midway between our inn and Camasunary, and the half towards Camasunary is at least as beautiful as the half towards Sligachan. As we turned to look towards Ben Blaven, the setting sun had coloured its gloomy rocks with a rich purple, as if its barren side were one mass of heath-blossom, and we stopped some minutes to watch the shadow creep up towards its summit. Then, for a few moments, with its crown of glory on it, it seemed like “the hoary head when found in the way of righteousness,” and then it gently lapsed into repose, clad in its grey evening robe. As we passed the base of our friend Scur-na-gillean, he donned his fleecy nightcap, and we felt glad that he had refrained so long and so unwontedly. We passed a herd of red deer, about to settle for the night, and at length, a little

tired, but none the worse for a twelve hours' expedition, we reached the inn. I trust I felt thankful for having had such a pleasant adventure, and for being permitted such a sight of the glorious beauties which an almighty and gracious Father has lavished on this locality, and all without a misadventure—not so much as a sprained ankle—to mar the enjoyment of the day.

THE BLACK COUNTRY.

CHAPTER VI.—EDUCATION IN THE BLACK COUNTRY.

IN this nineteenth century, the English nation may be denominated a vast academy, over which her Majesty exercises a gentle supervision, and regards with anxious solicitude the progress of her pupils. A paternal government corrects with mild severity the dictation of its working classes; benignantly smiles over their multiplication, and reviews their “seams” with critical but not malignant glance. “My Lords” in council are filled with sorrow when Jones, a candidate for pupil teachership, pronounces “man” to be an “indefinite article,” or asserts with confidence that our island home is encircled by the Mediterranean. They implore of Brown to pay more attention in future to his orthography; and it is in grief, rather than in anger, that they declare the button holes in the shirt sleeve sent up for inspection by Mary Robinson to be anything but what they ought to be. My lords have a right to expect, from Jones and his comrades, some return for all that has been bestowed upon them, in the shape of pounds, shillings, and pence; and when we take into consideration the almost incredible sums of money advanced yearly by Government in favour of the national schools, it ceases to be a matter of wonder that a sharp look-out is kept over their appropriation, or that statistical inquiries are frequently more minute than agreeable. My visit to the Black Country tended, more than anything else, to convince me that the schoolmaster was not only abroad, but wide awake; and, though not flogging, which in our era is vulgar, exercising a moral influence, infinitely more harassing to the undisciplined or refractory mind, than strokes of Solomon's remedy would have proved to the body impolitic.

“There will be a meeting to-morrow at D— of the ‘Schoolmasters’ Association;’ it may be rather interesting, and, at any rate, as you are so great on the subject, you cannot do better than go.”

Such was Mrs. Barry's counsel; and, having a great respect for her judgment on all matters, I followed her advice, and went to the meeting. It was a quarterly affair, and well attended. A large room was nearly filled, principally by the masters from different schools in the neighbourhood, though there were also present many of the clergy, and a sprinkling of mistresses. The latter looked as if they had plenty to say, and could, only that sex forbade, have said it full as well as the legitimate orators. I was one of the earliest arrivals, and had leisure to comment upon the varied looks and manners of the learned academicians who presented themselves. My guide, philosopher, and friend for the occasion

was the L. R. schoolmaster, and I certainly could not have desired a more intelligent companion, or one more adapted for the satisfaction of my much inquiring mind. He knew everybody, and everybody's affairs, capabilities, and prospects—his class in the training college, and subsequent success in the management of his school. For himself, he had taken "a first"—quite as much a desideratum, in his line of life, as the accomplishment of a like feat in the university—and was honourably made mention of in the blue book.

I could not but think, as the masters came in smiling and animated, that they were a good-looking, on the whole gentlemanly, and intelligent body of men; and there appeared to be a heartiness and sociability prevailing amongst themselves with which I was much struck and gratified. There seemed also to be an excellent understanding between them and the clergy who were present, and who took considerable part in the morning's discussion. I cannot say with truth that the greater number were wholly free from the scholastic swagger; that there was not a trifling intimation of manner, "I am a trained man; I know a thing or two; it's very well to talk, and I can bear with you, but you'll not convince me in a hurry!" but I do not believe that this was more than could deserve the name of a passive possession on the part of the owners.

A chairman had been duly appointed beforehand, and proceedings commenced with the repetition of the collect for the week, and others; after which the two masters to whose turn it had come round to do so, prepared to deliver their so-called "model lessons." Now I should gladly say more in praise of these lessons than my conscience will at all permit; it is difficult to imagine that men so well accustomed to give instruction before numbers, could really have found much inconvenience from their nerves; yet they certainly appeared by no means at ease; nor did they seem at home either with the class selected for them, or the subject they had chosen for the occasion of the latter; indeed, I am bound to confess that one of the performers made most decided hash; provoking the reflection that, were it a "model" at all, it assuredly was only of what a lesson ought *not* to be. The Scripture subject more particularly, appeared to me handled in a manner at once faulty and uninteresting. There was nothing in the exposition calculated to attract or fix the attention; very little elicited from the children; and the lesson to be "drawn out" remained almost as much to be drawn out, when the whole affair was disposed of.

The real interest of the meeting began with the after conversation and discussions; then, too, the advantage of these associations became apparent. The opportunities they offered to those who, without them, might have fluffed on in unsympathetic drudgery; of conversing together on points of common interest; comparing notes upon the various modes of working their schools, and the success attendant upon the same; of bringing under comprehension any "minute" of moment, lately issued by the Council on Education, and of making general the beneficial result of any local experiment.

On this occasion were to be brought under discussion, "The Advantage of Night Schools," and "The success attendant on the introduction of the Iron-master's Prize Scheme." Doctors differed on the first subject more than at first view might have seemed possible. Not, indeed, that there was any doubt thrown upon the positive good to be derived from the schools themselves; but there were some who contended that it was counterbalanced, in many instances, by the injury they remotely tended to inflict upon the day schools. "I am myself sore on this subject," said one; "for I trace a serious defalcation in my first and second classes to the fact of a night school having been, within the last year, established in the parish. It is not that the children are immediately sent there, for most of them are under the required age, but parents act upon the idea that by putting them to work at once, they get more *worth out of them*; while the boys themselves only lose what in a year or two they can pick up again at the night school." Several other masters came forward with a like testimony; while some, on the contrary, affirmed the night school to be a most valuable auxiliary to the other, not only because the teacher—who was paid, partly by Government, partly by pence collected from the scholars—was also engaged as an assistant in the day school, but also because the more fathers and elder brothers were able themselves to appreciate the advantage of education, the less disposed would they be to grudge its enjoyment to the smaller branches of the family.

My L. R. friend, Mr. Tishbourne, spoke very nicely on the subject, showing how, in his parish, they had persevered with the night school, in spite of many little adverse circumstances; and that now, with a fuller boys' school than had been known there before, they were also giving evening instruction to some eighty or ninety grown lads and men, who, lacking that resource, would doubtless be spending their leisure hours in pigeon-flying, or at the ale-house.

But then the clerical voice was heard, and put a finishing stroke to the discussion. The speaker was a venerable looking old man, who had listened with evident interest and some appearance of impatience to the previous remarks. "I really cannot allow," he began, "that the schoolmaster has *any* voice in this question! I am sure that none of my friends will be offended at my saying this, when I add that the benefit known to have accrued from the introduction of night schools, in the mining districts more especially, is such as can *only* be appreciated by the clergy, and is such also that no alleged disadvantage, as the premature withdrawal from a class of two or three children, ought for a moment to be allowed weight. The testimony of the clergy is unanimously favourable. For myself, I speak as one who, having known what it is alike to deplore the want of such an institution, and to rejoice in its adoption, feel that I cannot too earnestly recommend it to every parish where it is yet unknown. I look upon it as, in many instances, the one link between a clergyman and some of his parishioners; it gives us an opportunity of speaking with many to whom otherwise we should never

be allowed access. No one who had witnessed, as I have done, the change effected in a whole family, through the father's having been induced to join a night school; or who had seen the touching anxiety evinced by the poor fellows themselves to master the rudiments, with their almost childish delight when partially successful; could, I feel persuaded, again find in his heart to deery a plan, in its effects so eminently beneficial."

Much greater unanimity was apparent on the subject of iron-masters' prizes. These owed their origin to a desire on the part of some in authority to obviate the evil lately deprecated; namely, that of removing children from school, and putting them to work at a much earlier age than is common in agricultural districts. The amount advanced in favour of these prizes must have been magnificent, to judge from the sums of £3 and £4 stated to have been respectively carried off by various happy competitors. These were awarded as "higher prizes;" while to the less advanced, or those who tried for the first time, splendidly bound bibles, or other books, were presented, together with an imposing looking certificate in the shape of an embossed card, having for inscription the occasion on which it was obtained, the reason why, etc. These honours were reserved for such children, girls inclusive, as, having attained the advanced age of eleven years, bearing good characters, and having for two years been in regular attendance at a school placed under Government inspection, had also succeeded in acquitting themselves with credit at the specified examination. There were few present who had not something to state favourable to the working of this scheme, both as regarded the number of children who had by it been induced to remain longer in the school, and also as to the increased zest and diligence with which candidates for laurels had betaken themselves to study. An accurate account had been preserved of the uses to which the money prizes of former years had been devoted; and when now referred to, it appeared that, with scarcely an exception, the gift had been applied in a manner at once honourable to him who had received it, and gratifying to those whose kindness had been instrumental in its bestowal.

To show, in a few words, the real urgency of the case, I can hardly do better than give an extract from a report of one of her Majesty's inspectors for the district. It was quoted at the meeting I refer to, and certainly expressed the local necessities more forcibly than anything else I heard that day.

"Staffordshire has the credit of having reached the extreme point in the descending scale of age at which it is possible to employ children. I suppose there is no district in Europe that can show so large a proportion of children of six, seven, and eight years of age engaged in manufactures. If this is necessary to our commercial prosperity, the sooner we forfeit that prosperity the better. I cannot believe that wealth so purchased will be attended by God's blessing. A man who takes advantage of the ignorance or cupidity of the parent, to defraud his child of the bread of life, may show a fair balance-sheet in this world, but can hardly

expect it in the next. The child who goes down into the pit at ten years old, is consigned to darkness, morally as well as physically. I shall not soon lose the painful impression left on my mind by an examination by torchlight of nine collier boys, whom I got together in one of the best ordered pits on the west side of Dudley. Six had once attended school, and professed to be able to read. Only one could answer the simplest question in arithmetic—what 2s. 6d. in a day would amount to in a week; how many cwt. in a ton, etc. One, with great difficulty, multiplied 28 by 4. Passing from the 'reckoning night' at the office to the great reckoning day, they told me at once I referred to the last day, when God would judge us all. What would he ask? They appeared to have forgotten the Commandments. None knew how many Gospels there were. I began Matthew; one added John; none could tell all four. How many apostles? None knew. Which was the traitor? one said Peter, another Abraham. They all knew why they were better than the horses they were driving, 'because they had souls.' All would like to go to school again, 'to learn a bit more.' All would go to a night-school, if there was one. The bailiff reported them 'very fresh when they came up at six, after being down twelve hours,' and was sure a night-school would be an excellent thing. Throughout my tour in that dark district, the thought of that benighted group of boys, and the melancholy expression showed me by the torchlight on the pale faces of the elder men, seemed to follow me and drive me like a goad."

"Why, you are all in your Sunday clothes to-day, my little man; how is that?" Such was my paternal salute to a diminutive youth who was trudging into the school-yard as quickly as his bran-new "tights" would permit. It was the day after the meeting, and I was feeling particularly official.

"Please, sir, it's the Spectre," was the astounding reply; but my flesh did not creep, for I knew it before. Little beside the "Spectre" had been talked of at L. R. through the previous week; he had been due in March, but for some reason had postponed his visit to the time alluded to.

The annual appearance of her Majesty's Inspector of Schools was, I had become aware, the event in the parish, to which all minor occurrences must bow. I had conceived gloomy ideas of this functionary, and was surprised to perceive that the coming inspection seemed anticipated with pleasure. I questioned Mrs. Barry on the subject, and she replied that she did not know how the masters and mistresses would ever keep up to the mark without such an occasional fillip. "It does us all a world of good," she added; "it gives us an educational shake, without which we should feel inclined to settle on our lees sometimes. Besides, it tends to keep us humble; it is amazing what depths of ignorance are exposed to view on such occasions; and as surely as we've been pluming ourselves on the credit we are to get from the children's performance, do they seem to combine by their blunders to overwhelm us with confusion."

"And that is your notion of the agreeable?"

"Only my notion of the salutary and beneficial. But poor Miss Goodhart does not share my feelings by any means; we generally have her in frantic hysterics after an inspection, resigning her school, and in sad depression: then the next day she is all right again, and works ten times better for the next few months."

Miss Goodhart was the schoolmistress, a decided character, and, in her own way, a sort of gem. Not at all up, intellectually, to government requirements, and quite unable to qualify for a certificate, she was leaving the L. R. school at the following Christmas. In the meantime, she had accomplished her mission there, better than many a clever woman might have done. In manner at once gentle and dignified, she had subdued and influenced her pupils to a degree that was truly astonishing; and never, I think, did one person more thoroughly succeed in imparting *tone* to a number of others. From a collection of girls, many of the lowest orders, and originally as rough and unprepossessing as could well be imagined, she had, in the course of two years, got together a school, which, for its peculiarly *feminine* characteristics, was the admiration of the neighbourhood. It is true she sometimes assumed a little of the tragedy queen deportment; but I believe it all told well upon her little ex-barbarians. I see her now, as she stood at her desk dismissing the pupils, or issuing some mandate to the assembled throng. In her placid, almost languid appearance, was yet apparent a serene consciousness of authority, which was rarely disputed; while her own graceful gesticulations and genuflexions were imitated to perfection by the elder ones among her scholars.

But indeed we did *not* shine that day before H. M. Inspector, nor did he allow us to flatter ourselves with any vain belief that we had not done so badly after all! All our little weaknesses were dragged into the light of day, and all our little raw points touched up. Still, the wounds were those of a friend, and I, as a novice, felt that I was learning more of the ways and means of school discipline than a month's ordinary visitation would have imparted. The boys, indeed, came out rather strong in their drawings, especially in the mechanical and engineering department, which appeared particularly needful to be attended to in such a district; also, as their clever and very energetic master, Mr. Tishbourne, was of recent appointment, he could not be held responsible for the peculiar and heretical notions entertained by some of his disciples. There appeared to be a universal impression that the Ancient Britons were Mahometans; while opinions were divided as to whether Magna Charta was signed by Julius Caesar or Queen Elizabeth. Our geography, too, was imperfect, as we placed Antioch in Mesopotamia, and surrounded Lisbon with the Himalaya Mountains. Our spelling was not good, and our arithmetic was worse; but it was in the catechism that we especially extinguished ourselves. I saw Mrs. Barry more than once try to stop her ears; while I was sadly afraid, by the unusual distension of her husband's mouth, that he had been endeavouring to *sign* the correct thing to some young ignoramus.

If so, he met with as little success as he deserved. "Spontius Pilate," who we fondly trusted had been for ever abolished, came out in full feather; but the "duties," or at least their comprehension, proved a signal failure. While some questions relating to godfathers were being put by the inspector, one little hand was seen held up beyond the allotted time. As the hand's owner had a weak voice, his neighbour answered for him—

"Please, sir, he says he han't got any."

"Got no godfathers? Why, how many children here have been baptized?"

Six hands from a class of about thirty boys were visible.

"Now, how many go to Sunday school and church?"

The numbers dwindled down to four; while a feeble throat was heard to exclaim, "Please, I go to the Methodishes school on Sundays."

"Ha!" said the inspector; and that monosyllable may have meant a great deal, though I interpreted it only as a decent reticence or reserve in expressing any opinion on that point.

"Do you find the same difficulty in getting your girls to a Sunday school?" inquired the inspector, addressing Mrs. Barry.

"We have more in proportion," she replied; "chiefly, I think, because there are more females than men who are able and willing to assist us; we have also established a 'death club,' which has tended to increase our numbers."

"Ah, then you, too, patronize those horrid clubs, in which the mothers who pay lament that none of their children have died, so as to make it worth their while doing so."

"Is not that rather too bad?" rejoined Mrs. Barry; "first, you frown upon us for not getting the children into a Sunday school, and then you upbraid us for trying one of the only plans which seems to give us a hold upon them."

He owned that it was rather a hard case. "But why do you not try clothing clubs? surely it must be more satisfactory to invest money in what brings a safe return every year, than in what death alone can make available."

"One would certainly imagine so," she replied, "but it is not the case here; we have in the parish clothing clubs of all descriptions, savings banks, and shoe clubs; but we find that in point of popularity a death club out-does them all."

"A most incomprehensible fact," was the reply; and so it most certainly is.

A SHARE IN A MINE.—When the Elector, John the Constant, in 1529, designed to honour Luther with a share in a productive silver-mine at Schneeberg, as a compliment for his translation of the Bible, he replied, "It better becomes me to pay the amount of my share with a prayer, that the ores may continue productive, and the product may be well applied." This he confirmed soon after, with these words: "I have never taken a penny for my translation, and never asked it." And at another place he says, "If I did not feel such a painful concern for His sake who died for me, the whole world could not give me money enough to write a book or to translate any portion of the Bible. I am not willing to be rewarded by the world for my labour: the world is too poor for that."